

The people of Nagamo are farmers. The seat of their extended families is in Maha and Shuri, and they have their own local deity places (ujigami in Japanese). The people of Minatogama are fishermen, their extended family seats are in Itoman. They too have their local deities and many of their religious ceremonies are centered around the gods of the sea and the dragon of the sea god's palace.

596
776
778

The population of Minatogama, as of December 31, 1951, was 1108 (515 males, 593 females) in 213 households, an average of 5.2 persons per household, and of adjoining Nagamo, 564 persons (262 males, 302 females) with 113 households, an average of 5.0 persons per household.

162.

The fishing village of Minatogama is believed to be about 250 years old. It was founded, according to local residents, by the fishermen of Itoman who were accustomed to fish off shore near the islands around the southeastern and southwestern parts of Okinawa. The place was first established as a temporary location for the fishing boats and later permanent settlement took place. The tombs of Itoman are still the ultimate burying ground for large numbers of the Minatogama fishermen. After 250 years the ties with the parent town are still strong.

361
173

The village has two traditions involving contacts with other peoples. The first is concerned with the Chinese. One is a spot on the shore where some Chinese are said to have landed over 200 years ago. Many fishermen pray to it on certain occasions of the year. Little is known of what happened to the Chinese, but supposedly they were buried high up the side of a steep mountain nearby, inside a cave with stalactites. Bones said to be of these Chinese may still be seen there. The cave is difficult of access.

173
177
178

There is also the tradition of London sailors said to have been shipwrecked at the port of Kiyau on the southwest tip of Okinawa. A child was born of the union of one of these sailors with an Okinawan woman and the sailor later returned to England. The tomb of the woman and the child is revered as a religious site. It is now a small shrine on the outskirts of Itoman called Rondongama, Rondon for London. Old women of Minatogama sing a song of this old love called Michinakankai. The theme of the song is the unashamed love of the woman for her departed London lover, an Okinawan anticipation of Madame Butterfly.

178
533

In this area the low, bare hills form in a haphazard way a series of valleys, some long and narrow, others like an amphitheatre with an open face to the sea. Low passes connect the valleys. One such pass, about 150 feet high, now on Highway 64, leads from the valley of

133
361

[TEXT CONTINUES ON TOP OF P. 53--Analyst]

- 9 The writer visited both the cave and the site near Itoman town in August 1951. The shrine is now situated on a small hill on the outskirts of Itoman. The bones were moved here during the war from Mizato village to escape Japanese bombing. A large cave nearby, associated with the mother and the child, is overgrown and very dangerous to enter because of the danger of snakes.

each of the villages, they seldom reach real intensity or a point where the husband sends his wife back to her parents and obtains a divorce.

592
606

A special problem, ordinarily calling for adoption as the solution, is the situation in a family with no sons. During the child bearing ages a family tries very hard to get a son. The man with a family of daughters will resort to adoption of a male child of a relative, if at the end of a child bearing period, no sons have been born to him. But adoption, while available as a device for insuring the continuity of the family, is uncommon and does not have the importance historically attached to it in Japan. Adoption is discussed in more detail in Section 6.

597
[842]

3

The Extended Family and its Branches

The extended family (ichimon in Japanese, munchu in Okinawan) consists of all families in the main and collateral line of descent from the common ancestor.² This ancestor, who founded the house, is an historical, or at least a supposed historical person. The descendants of the founder of the family, themselves united in a family group, are thus related to one another, though the older the family, the more remote these relationships become. Many villagers recognize that they are related to one another, but the relationships are seldom clearly defined beyond the second cousin. After this people become relatives, (shinseki or shinrui in Japanese). These words, used synonymously in Okinawa, indicate an awareness of a relationship without knowing offhand its exact nature. This problem is solved in part, as will appear later on, in Section 8, by knowing the household order name of each family, but even here individual relationships are difficult to trace.

614
596

602

Contemporary lack of precise knowledge of family genealogies is due in large part to the destruction of many family records during the war. The keeping of genealogies was common, especially among the families who belonged to the old Okinawan nobility. The genealogies lost in the war are irreplaceable. The same is true of the official family registers which were also destroyed. They were replaced with ones prepared by officials personally interviewing the families involved. While this procedure succeeded in recording contemporary data with a fair degree of accuracy, it could not duplicate the minute details, going back for generations, which were recorded in the old registers.

601
217
[565]

² Dictionaries usually define ichimon as clan, but I have avoided using this term because of ambiguities in usage. In American practice, clan has been applied to groups in which descent is reckoned through the mother. See R. H. Lowie, *Primitive society*, New York, 1920, 111-12. Father-sibs (Lowie's term) or family groups could be used, but the latter term suggests more a collection of families than a large unified family with many sub-families.

592

Mother of head, age 48
 Grandfather of head, age 65
 Younger brother, age 25
 Younger brother, age 16
 Younger sister, age 9
 Younger sister, age 11
 Younger brother's wife, age 25
 Two nieces, ages 4 and 2, daughters of the eldest younger brother and his wife.

These examples, of which many more could be given, illustrate several points regarding the family system. It is not uncommon to have as many as four generations in a family unit, the present head, his parent, the children, and the grandchildren of the head. There are four generations in illustration #3. The combination of a first son and his wife, with his parents, his younger brothers and sisters, and the head's own children, a common composition, illustrates the responsibilities of the first son both to his parents and to his siblings. Responsibility for illegitimate children is with the family of the girl. Occasionally a husband will accept an illegitimate child born to his wife either before or during the marriage, but it is more usual for the illegitimate child to be reared in the household from which the mother came. In the second illustration, one illegitimate daughter lives with her grandparents and the mother is not in the household. The third illustration shows an unusual situation in which the young head and his wife have their children, his mother, his grandfather, minor younger sisters and brothers, and, in addition, a married younger brother and his wife and their two children. Ordinarily these would have established a branch family and not have been part of the older brother's household. [848]

At present, the commonest family compositions are (1) the biological family, (2) the family with a young eldest son as the head with the widowed mother and other minor brothers and sisters, a type of composition which has increased as a result of the war, (3) uncles, aunts, cousins, and occasionally unrelated persons may live in the house, (4) often grandparents are found with their grandchildren, (5) widows with minor children are also common, an incidence increased by war.

The percentage of widows in Minatogawa, in addition to the casualties of war, is due to the loss of fishermen at sea, a not uncommon tragedy as the typhoon season coincides with the best fishing seasons. Since widows with children seldom remarry, the family composition remains the same until the first son assumes the leadership of the family and the mother resides with him. [162] [163] [581]

Each of the families making up the extended family is either a main or a branch family. This arrangement is repeated in the individual families as well. If we take as an example a family with both parents, a first son, a second son, and a first daughter, we may expect as a normal development that the eldest son will marry between 24 and 27 and live with his wife at the home of his parents, that the father will

596 ●
 [582]
 [591]

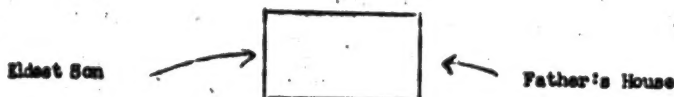
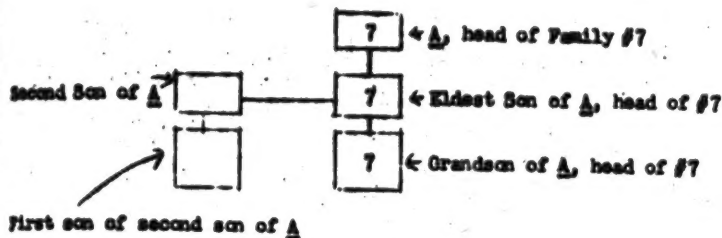
- 596 live with his wife at the home of his parents, that the father will
[887] formally retire from active management of his property--but not from physical labor--at the age of 60, that both parents will continue living with their eldest son, the daughter-in-law, and the grandchildren, and that the second and any succeeding sons, when they reach marriageable age, will marry, and at this time--if it has not been done before--the father or the eldest son will provide a house site and some land, permitting the establishment of a branch family. The
[591] first and succeeding daughters will marry first or other sons of other families, leave their parents' home and accept a position in the main or in a branch family of the husband's house.

613 The parallelism in structure between the extended family and its
596 member families and the individual family with its branch families established by sons other than the first can be seen in the following diagram:

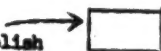


All of the families, except those designated with the numeral 1, are branch families of the extended family. Family #7, is a branch family of a branch family. Family #5 (itself a branch) is the main family of Family #7 as far as the immediate descendants in Family #7 are concerned.

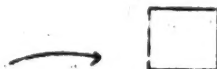
In the following illustration, the second son has established a branch family of Family #7, while the head's own son will inherit the main house, leaving his second son to establish a branch. Family #7 is a branch of a branch, but with relation to succeeding houses in the direct line, it is a main family.



Second and Third Sons establish
Branch Families



Daughters marry and go to Husband's Father's
House or to Branch Families established by
their husbands.



The family system, through the succession of the first son to his father's house, prevents the extinction of the main family line, and at the same time creates branch families with close ties with the parent family.

Lacking a son, adoption (to be discussed below) is available to provide against extinction of any family, but in Okinawan villages it has seldom been necessary to use it.

The emphasis in the family system is on providing for the eldest son who succeeds to the father's estate. The sons other than the first must be prepared to accept little or nothing, in the case of the very poor, when they marry and separate themselves from the parental house.

In these Okinawan villages, the second and succeeding sons (or younger brothers if the head of the house is the eldest brother) remain in the family until marriage, usually around 25. They do not live in separate houses, but may have separate rooms, or a small shack in the compound for sleeping purposes. Unless they live in another town or work

arable land available for cultivation. House sites cannot be set up on rocky or mountain land away from the village. Whether on the island as a whole the increase in population, the repatriation and the stoppage of large scale emigration will in the future seriously diminish the amount of land available for agricultural uses is an interesting question, but there certainly is a direct relationship between population growth and land taken up with house sites.⁵ Not only will a growing population enforce greater demands on the land, but it will inevitably cut down on the amount.

Among the fishermen of Minatogawa, there is a little more fluidity in the establishment of branch families. There are seldom enough lands to subdivide, and only about 50% of the fishermen own land in addition to their house site. The branch household is established according to the son's taste, and the father may give money if he can afford it so the son can set himself up in Itoman, Naha, or elsewhere. The usual procedure here is to give land in a former agricultural area of the village, land which was developed in the southern part of the village as a result of the destruction of the war in other parts. Here formerly arable land was taken over directly for residential use.

In Matsuda, it is possible to use newly developed areas. This community, unlike the other two, is a series of sub-settlements. In two of these, branch families have settled, one near the seashore, and the other on reclaimed forest land. In both of these areas, the pattern of settlement is different; the clusters of houses give way to the scattered houses, some standing out alone on the top of a knoll or hill, some near the forested slopes of the hillside. In these areas, there is an atmosphere of pioneer settlement. As in Hanashiro, the buying of near land and the selling of far off land and exchange of land are practiced. Since the reclaimed area is considered to be less productive and less desirable, the poorer families are able to purchase land here for their second sons.

5

The Pivotal Importance of the First Son

The key person in the family system is the first son. He normally succeeds to the house at the death or retirement of his father. The father may not legally retire before 60. In rare cases--none were encountered.

⁵ In general, house and village sites are on arable land, but the quality of this land naturally varies from place to place. See any of the 11 sheets of the Okinawan Soils Map and the discussion in the Remarks column of the legend with reference to the types of soils on which village sites are found.

593
596
[428]
[691]
864
[591]
tered in the villages--a first son may be passed over in favor of a second son because of mental disability, gross incompetence, or excessive drinking, or the father, by selling his land to his other sons may in effect disinherit his first son. These actions involve the courts and it is rare for villagers to engage in litigation. In practice, the first son almost invariably succeeds. On his marriage, the first son and his wife live in the home of his parents. There are some exceptions to this. Since the war, some first sons in agricultural communities have found opportunities in business in Naha, in larger towns like Itoman or Nago, in military government or in Okinawan government positions. In this case, the first son does not live with his parents, but he continues with this new work in the strange town, the parents on their retirement, or as they become more helpless, joining the son. But in cases where the first son continues in the occupation of his father, this is the usual and expected practice. Only long standing incompatibility between father and son prevents such an arrangement.

593
464
166
167
One point regarding the future of the family system that may assume importance in Okinawa is that the responsibilities of the first son increase with any decline in opportunities for succeeding sons. The traditional outlet for sons other than the first in Oriental countries has been migration to the cities, to lands of new settlement, or emigration to foreign countries. In Okinawa, emigration to various parts of the world, the South Seas, Hawaii, Peru, Brazil has been the most important of these outlets. Its history cannot be understood without appreciating this fact. Both first and succeeding sons have emigrated. With the virtual stoppage of emigration, the only solution for second and succeeding sons would seem to lie in opportunities coming from military installations, government work, industrial and urban development, in addition to the present opportunities in agriculture. If with a growing population, the family system begins to break apart, it will probably be first noticed in the inability of the first sons to bear increased responsibilities.

593
596
For this reason, it is interesting to record some observed attitudes of first and other sons in the villages studied. These attitudes are personal ones. No inter-village comparisons can be made. The first is one of pride in being a first son and in assuming the headship of the house but dislike of the responsibility of providing for siblings, especially when the estate is not large. Dislike of the responsibilities of being the first son was most observable in Minatogawa. Here the lack of land, succession merely to a house site, a boat or fishing gear, but with the same responsibility for care for younger brothers and sisters, parents and grandparents put the clearest burden on the first son. The financial burden of paying for anniversary celebrations on the death of a relative is especially onerous. There is only minor help from younger brothers. This fact is not resented as a lack of generosity of the younger brothers who by now would have branch houses of their own; it is part of the family system. Younger brothers might contribute, as one first son jokingly said, fifty yen to a celebration that cost two thousand.

Part 1

Minatogawa, the Fishing Community

1

Introduction

Fishing families are a closely knit group. They are usually interrelated. For the most part, the main houses of their extended families are in the fishing town of Itoman. Fathers, sons, wives, daughters, grandparents participate in some phase of fishing activity.

226
[596]
607

In an agricultural community, the first son remains in the home working the fields of his father. In fishing, through long custom, there is an avoidance of teamwork among close relatives. Members of the immediate family will not go out on the same fishing boat. A father will not take his son, an elder brother will not take a younger. Partners and working teams on boats are more distant relatives or friends. If a father and a son are on the same boat and it is lost, the present and the succeeding head both perish. To this incontrovertible possibility, there has been added the belief that if two persons of the same immediate family go to sea together on the same boat, there will be a disaster. And actual and near disasters are frequent enough to make both points of view understandable. The sons of fishermen, who are learning the ways of the fish and of the sea, go on the boats of others. Many younger fishermen regard the belief that it is inviting disaster to have two members of the same immediate family together on the same boat as a superstition (meishin), but to my knowledge, no fisherman ignores the custom.

226
593

[183]

In Minatogawa, about one half of the fishermen have fields of their own, usually small and poor. Perhaps twenty men in the village may be classed as half farmers and half fishermen, but even in these cases it is the wives and the children who have the continuing responsibility for the fields.

226
241
[423]

Neither is it rare for a fisherman to be a stonecutter. Perhaps another twenty men are engaged in the summer in fishing, and in stonecutting in the winter, or on unfavorable fishing days. The three main occupations of the village, including Nagamo, are thus found in varying combinations. Fishing is the most exacting and offers few opportunities for amateurs. Stonecutting requires strength and endurance. For those who have land, agriculture offers possibilities of growing one's own food and of avoiding cash outlays.

226
324
463

In an average summer month, there may be about 20 good fishing days. But because of unusual or unexpected rains or typhoons opportunities may be fewer. In 1951, there were only about ten working days in each of the summer months. In winter fishing days average about a week in a

226
463
[132]

Taira: An Okinawan Village 413

bers may be recruited and present members expelled. In others, which are closed, membership is automatic and inevitable, depending in no way on the behavior of the individuals involved. We are here concerned with these latter groups whose membership is determined by sex, age, kinship, and rules of residence. Whether an American male lives in Connecticut or California, in the city or the suburbs, is to a large degree a matter of his personal preference. This is not the case for everybody in Taira, although there are people who at any time may leave the village to seek their fortune. 571

There are two types of households in Taira: those of oldest sons, who live in the house of their parents, and those of younger sons, who establish a nuclear household of their own, which may be near the house of their father. Many young sons, however, leave the central village and settle in its outlying districts or move to the southern part of the island. Whereas formerly many younger sons moved to Japan or to one of its prewar South Pacific mandates, or to Hawaii and South America, since the end of World War II employment opportunities around U.S. Army installations absorb many such migrants. The oldest son is required to live in his parents' house and eventually take over the duties of a household head. Unmarried younger sons remain in the household until they marry or leave the parental home for work elsewhere. 596
594
[166]
[167]

For a woman it is customary to move to her husband's home if he is an older son or into a house in his village if he is a younger son. In the old days this usually involved simply a move in the village, since the preference was to marry a woman from the same community. Nowadays there is no clear-cut preference; a woman from central Taira may become the bride of a man from that part of the village, from one of the outlying parts of Taira, or from another village, usually to the north. Of a sample of 55 marriages, 26 of the wives were from Taira, 29 from other villages, five of which were immediately adjacent. 591
582

The composition of the household, therefore, changes for the individual during his lifetime, and it is not the same for all persons in the village. Several children not only have their parents and at least one paternal grandparent but also paternal aunts or uncles who live under the same roof. If the father is a younger son, only one's parents and siblings are household members. Since houses are small and space is very limited, all these members of the household live in close face-to-face relationship. Women tend to outlive men, so that there are many more old women living with their married sons than old men. This is why children have a grandmother more often in the home than a grandfather (see Table 1). 592
593
[165]

Taira: An Okinawan Village 493 527

as usual. It was an affair organized by the women leaders, which, though a little slow in starting, turned into a gay carousing for the older women, who were less inhibited than the younger ones and needed little encouragement to drink and dance. 562 575 [888]

The daily life of a woman is more monotonous than her husband's and she has less leisure and recreation. After a day of hard work, men sit down alone or in groups to spend the evening in relaxation with a bottle of sake. After a short time they show signs of pleasant intoxication and all burdens of life seem to disappear. Such recourse to care-free diversion is generally denied women. Instead, they are loaded down with household chores and care of infants and guests after a day of work in fields and forests. They spend their little free time exchanging news with other women or talking with other family members or visitors who assemble around the charcoal fire in the back room during winter evenings. Only women of advanced age feel free to join the men in drinking at home. 562 512 [273] [888]

Men have greater sexual freedom. They are at liberty to have affairs with other women outside the village and on trips to the city may visit tea houses and afterwards enjoy the favors of a prostitute if their pocket books allow. 562 837

Status differences based on age are reflected in the social structure and clearly denoted in the kinship terms. There is a special term of reference and address for "first son" and "first daughter" and for "older brother" and "older sister." As mentioned, ideally the oldest son assumes responsibility for the household, for his parents, and for the ancestral tablets. Even if he leaves his parental home temporarily or permanently for the city, where economic prospects are better, he remains the nominal household head and sends money back to his family. Theoretically the oldest male may retain authority until death, although in practice most men retire from this position at the age of 61. Their retirement is made official by an entry in the population registry. They continue to live with their oldest son and act as advisors and critics. A man's loss of authority with age occurs around his late fifties and early sixties and is evidenced not only by his retirement but also by his loss of the right to vote in village meetings. Veneration for age itself therefore, does not exist. Actual behavior toward the grand-parental generation, all the members of which are addressed as "grand-mother" or "grandfather" regardless of actual kinship, is warm, mildly playful, and indulgent. Disrespect, however, is absent. 561 554 593 887 561 554 [596] [576]

It is characteristic of the relationship between children and grand-mothers that in addressing nonrelated old women, the suffix -san, which denotes respect, is most often dropped for the "grandmother" 603 601

47ⁿ Six Cultures: Studies of Child Rearing

866 first child of a nuclear family, on the other hand, will not have these
887 supports and thus finds this time severely depriving. The child in a
603 nuclear family with a number of older siblings to support and meet
his dependency needs will find the transition difficult but will suffer
less deprivation. If there is a grandmother or older siblings in the
house, he can still claim some infantile support until he is about 4
or 5 years old. They continue to comfort him when he cries, help him
in dressing, bathing, and eating. "Go ask your grandmother or older
sibling," instructs the mother when the child requests aid. Or, if she
happens not to be busy, she will help him herself.

[594] Mothers in extended households complained that grandparents often
intervened on behalf of the child and made disciplining very difficult.
The kindergarten teacher remarked on the differences between chil-
dren who have grandparents and those who do not. "Those who do not
have grandparents are much easier to handle, they don't cry so easily
and do many things for themselves. My child always runs to grand-
father whenever I scold her (there is no grandmother in the house)
... and we mothers end up by being scolded by the old folks," she
remarked.

It is not an uncommon sight to see a child crying and running to his
grandmother on being reprimanded by his mother. With carrying,
hugging, and venting anger against the mother, the old woman com-
forts the child. Children soon learn that if no one else complies with
their demands, grandmother or grandfather will grant them satis-
faction.

866 Grandmothers often will protect and indulge children of the vil-
603 lage other than their own grandchildren. One day as the fieldworker
855 sat talking with two mothers and watching their children play, the
question of Okinawans' dislike of children's crying, and of overin-
dulgence of grandmothers arose. The year and a half old boy of one
of the women at that instant got one foot over the lower rail of a
fence. As the child watched others climbing the fence, he tried to lift
the other foot. He howled as he discovered the feat too difficult. The
mother made no move to go to the boy's aid but instead sat laughing
at the "foolish predicament he got himself into." Suddenly from the
house across the way rushed a grandmother. She picked the screaming
boy up and examined him for bruises. When she spotted the mother
sitting within eye and earshot, she rushed over with the boy and
started to scold her. "What are you doing sitting there! Just looking
at your crying child! Why didn't you go over and help him ... see
what the matter was anyway?" And with this she put the child in the
mother's lap and gave her a slap on the back. The old woman then

went home and hysterically reported the incident to her family. The mother, meanwhile, laughed and told her boy, "Just like your grandmother, can't stand to hear you cry even when you are not hurt!" She then went on to say that both she and her husband ignore the boy's crying in situations where he could help himself, but the boy's grandmother immediately runs to soothe and aid him. Generally it may be said that in extended households, grandmothers tend to prolong the dependence period and discourage independence and responsibility. [596]

The relationship between grandfather and grandchild is more restrained. Although grandfathers may be seen carrying children or doing things for them, there is always a discreet distance between them, the result of early training in respect and deference to male elders. Children do not tease their grandfathers as they do their grandmothers. Older boys, in their late teens, may carry on a superficial joking relationship with their grandfathers, but they must be careful not to show disrespect. The male elders in turn show greater affection for the male child than for the female. When both grandparents are living in the house, the child, whether male or female, is more likely to direct his succorant appeals to grandmother rather than grandfather.* [603, 858, 866]

Mothers, themselves, are often not too consistent in their training for independence. They will feel sorry for the child when he is first weaned and allow him to stay close to them until the birth of the next sibling. On the other hand, they will encourage the little 2-year-olds to imitate older girls and boys, particularly in their baby-tending role. A mother will strap a "doll" on her daughter or son's back. The "dolls" are usually rolled blankets or jackets, for real dolls are expensive and rarely bought in the village. Older children and adults do not fail to comment to a child carrying such a burden. They praise him for being such a good caretaker; they pretend to see the "baby" sleeping and report this to him. If the strapping becomes loose, they call to him and reassemble the "baby" and the pinning. The doll is never played with or manipulated. Thus the 2-year-old gets praised for emulation of the responsible and nurturant behavior expected of older siblings. [866, 857, 862, 524, 155]

Perhaps it is this role training that explains in part the absence of aggression toward the newborn sibling, which might well be expected with such a short interval between weaning from the breast and back and the birth of the next child. The fieldworker did not observe one instance of such hostility. If there is any hostility expressed, it is against the mother in outbursts of temper and against those who ridicule or try to comfort the displaced child. The grandmother's aggressive actions against the mother may encourage the child in this behavior. [867, 593]

* Only 4 out of 24 sample children lived in the same house with a grandfather.